

BORREGAS AVENUE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES

Summary of Community Input Meeting #2 November 15, 2005

A second Community Input Meeting was hosted by the City of Sunnyvale on November 15, 2005 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The meeting was held at Columbia Middle School, 739 Morse Avenue, Sunnyvale.

Notices of the Meeting were posted on the City of Sunnyvale home page. Notices were also mailed to residents adjacent to the project and emailed to neighborhood associations, bicycle organizations and other community groups. The meeting notification also appeared in the SNAIL newsletter. Approximately fifty-five (55) members of the community attended the Community Input Meeting.

Agenda Items Covered

The meeting was conducted in accordance with the agenda attached to this Summary as Appendix 1. Eileen Goodwin, Apex Strategies, acted as the moderator of the meeting.

Ms. Goodwin first reviewed the meeting format. Ms. Goodwin noted that the purpose of the meeting was to obtain input from the community regarding design issues regarding the proposed pedestrian/bicycle bridges and there would be no final decisions reached.

Ms. Goodwin then introduced Jack Witthaus, of the City of Sunnyvale, who reviewed the project's benefits to the community and outlined the next steps in the process. The most significant next step he noted was that an Environmental document will be considered by the City Council in April 2006. There will be opportunity for additional public comment in the process of circulating the document and before the City Council.

Ms. Goodwin then reviewed the comments made by members of the community at the September 28, 2005 Community Input Meeting in order to confirm the issues and concerns raised in that meeting.

Jack Witthaus then provided an overview of the proposed bridge design. He explained the proposed locations of the bridge structures and their impacts on local streets. He showed the relationship of the bridge to the surrounding streets. He discussed existing traffic patterns and parking and how those would be affected by the proposed bridges as well as proposed solutions, specifically that a three-way stop sign and ladder crosswalk would be installed at the intersection of Borregas/Ahwanee as part of the project.

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Ms. Goodwin then moderated public input on the bridge design issues and the traffic and parking impacts. Those comments are set out below under the heading “Bridge Design, Location and Impacts on Local Streets.”

Michael Fitzpatrick, an architect with HDR, was introduced. He presented potential landscape and aesthetic treatment options that might be employed to address potential privacy concerns of adjacent neighbors, as well as to improve the aesthetic appearance of the proposed structures.

Public input was then gathered from meeting attendees on the aesthetic and landscape issues. Those comments are set out below under the heading “Aesthetic Issues and Potential Screening.”

In addition to oral comments, written comments were solicited from community members attending the meeting. Where those comments fell under the headings set out below, they have been incorporated under them. General comments, both written and oral, that did not specifically address either Bridge Design, Location and Impacts on Local Streets or Aesthetic Issues and Potential Screening are set out below under the heading “General Comments.”

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Public Comments

Bridge Design, Location and Impacts on Local Streets

Comment/Question	Response/Answer
What is the height of the structure?	At their highest point, the bridges will be 18' 3" at the bottom of the structure, 21' high at the surface where people will walk or ride.

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Comment/Question

Response/Answer

Would you consider a diverter/physical limitation device?

In order to accommodate emergency vehicles, the City has a policy against utilizing physical limitations on collector and arterial roadways. In addition to a three-way stop, the City could consider in the future, a lighted crosswalk. They work well with high pedestrian volume. Walkers would push a button for the crosswalk to light up. This would not be put in immediately, only if, after experience, it is determined to be warranted. It is hoped that signing, striping and a 3-way stop control should be sufficient.

The parking situation on Alturas Avenue is bad.

City staff will recommend the institution of a residential permit parking system as part of this project.

Use permit parking. This work, as well as enforcement.

Comment noted.

On Borregas Avenue, there is not enough parking. Everyone has lots of cars; additional parking is needed

Comment noted.

Why doesn't the ramp go the other way?

Freeway signage and high voltage lines in the area mandate the direction of the design.

Explain the residential permit. School bus parks on the local street a lot.

Permit parking will be a first for the City. City council will have to approve the concept, and then staff will work out the details of the program. The city will conduct additional detailed parking studies as well.

When studying parking demands, will you look at storage of vehicles as criteria?

That would be very subjective and difficult to determine.

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Comment/Question	Response/Answer
Do we have to wait for stop signs?	The stop signs will be installed as part of the project.
Has making Ahwanee Avenue one-way been considered in order to save parking?	Staff will consider that, but creating a one-way street could negatively impact neighboring streets.
Making Ahwanee Avenue one-way would impact side streets.	Comment noted.
On Sunnyvale Avenue there are lots of funerals, schools, the railroad tracts, etc which make it difficult to bicycle on.	Comment noted. Staff noted that there were space constraints on Sunnyvale Ave, but that compared to Mathilda Ave, it was a much more comfortable place to ride.
A triple stop sign at Borregas/Ahwanee is a good thing.	Comment noted. Staff will install a 3-way stop sign.
Was putting the bridge in the middle of Borregas considered and alternatives looked at?	Yes. A variety of options were considered and the alternatives discarded due to public input, driveway impacts and visual impacts. This design results in a bridge that meets the Caltrans standards (i.e. no 90° impacts, etc.).
Just became a two-car family and got a warning about parking on the street even though we were switching it out.	Comment noted.
I am for the project. Is it possible to create parking under the bridge?	No, there is not enough room due to the need for a crash barrier.
Drive down Borregas Avenue on your way home and look at the parking.	Comment noted.
What the gradient of the ramp?	It is ADA compliant, 1' in 12', on a forty-foot radius.
Will the ramp be encouraging high speeds for children on vehicles?	There will be a wider than standard area at the bottom of the ramp as a recovery zone.

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Comment/Question	Response/Answer
What about drainage of the bridge? Sometimes puddles and moss can be a safety issue in the winter.	There will be drainage for the bridge structure.
How high are the side walls?	Eight (8) feet.
Some people are afraid of heights. Bridge railings should be solid in the lower part.	That is a good comment. We are looking at that for ADA reasons as well.
Will tandems and bike trailers be able to get through the entrances?	The structures will be made accessible to those vehicles.
Every morning there is a traffic jam. Plan for rumble strips to discourage skateboards?	We will look into that.
What has been shown looks good for pedestrians. Suggest that the structure be moved East for bikes so that the turn onto the bridge isn't so tight.	Comment noted.
Signage for this bridge should exist.	We will look into expanding signage plan.
The curves in the structure will encourage bike to bike collisions.	Structure will meet all safety design criteria.
Was an underpass considered?	Security concerns, costs and flooding risk made an overhead structure the preferred alternative.
The crash barrier looks typical. What is it protecting?	The end of the structure.
The Columbia parking lot situation is still not being enforced.	Call Code Enforcement. Staff will also alert Public Safety of the situation.

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Comment/Question

Response/Answer

Can the bridge be made inaccessible to shopping carts but still allow bicycles and wheelchairs? We have a bad problem with shopping carts in the S.N.A.I.L neighborhood – we don't need more shopping carts here.

Comment noted.

Sun in the mornings definitely causes sunlight in the eyes, causing wrecks. How about a sun-shade? Three way stops would slow down traffic. Put a cage over the bridge. No spare parking on Borregas. Take parking away from the Sands Apartments. Add parking garages for them. Are the Sands Apartments going to be torn down and two story put in? Schools do not promote children riding bikes to school. Not a lot of signs before intersections. WE have a "bike route" sign on every corner.

Comments noted.

Aesthetic Issues and Potential Screening

Comment/Question

Response/Answer

Who will maintain the landscaping?

The City will take care of maintenance.

Our bedroom faces the wall. There are vines now. Please keep the vines.

There are screening alternatives that will be passed around for review.

One of the photos was of the backyard of an attendee.

Comment noted.

Are there pictures of the Orchard Park side? I am for the bridge but want pictures.

There are not pictures of the Highway 101 structure but there are some photos of the Highway 237 structure.

Has thought been given to wind and sound potential?

The light weight mesh would be less likely to create noise.

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Comment/Question	Response/Answer
Prefer the mesh; Eight gauge, with 14 gauge horizontal.	We will look into that.
Dots block wind; good for bike riders.	Comment noted.
Why are people asking about the mesh? Let the designers choose.	The City is trying to have a community based design. You will live near it. Please drive around and look at other versions of screening.
I don't want people on bridges looking into my bedroom and yard.	Comment noted. The City will install screening as part of the project that will limit visibility from the bridges into nearby backyards.
Can the stop signs be lower so there is no sun in our eyes. What about printed material for kids? Creative exit and entrance needs to be thought through and safe. City should have bicycle education for kids and residents.	Comment noted. The City will provide for a safe landing and a safe intersection.
Need posting at bridge. There is concern about shopping carts and ramp needs to be posted. Concerned that this bridge could become a second skateboard park; it is a safety thing.	Comment noted. The city will install informational and regulatory signs.
The landing at the bottom looks prone to kids stunts. May be a need for more landscaping and bridge.	Comment noted. The City will provide for a safe landing and a safe intersection.
Borregas Avenue is a long, straight street. Finally got vines. Now you are eliminating them.	Landscaping could grow between the structure and the wall. The vines should be able to stay.
Consensus is to keep the vines.	Comment noted.
There are graffiti concerns. Make the material of the bridge and wall easy to clean. What are we going to do? Who is responsible?	The City is responsible. The City has a twenty-four hour policy on graffiti cleanup. A coating will be used to help the cleanup.

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Comment/Question	Response/Answer
I am supportive. I think an open fence is a bigger deterrent for graffiti. As someone who rollerblades, I don't think the 5% grade is too steep.	Comment noted.
There is nothing here that will attract skateboarders; it is not that interesting.	Comment noted.
The apartments have a lot of smaller kids that would be tempted.	Comment noted.
Planter boxes are a good idea. They should be planted when the project is done.	Comment noted.
Formliner. People on bikes could be a theme. Needs to look good with sound wall and vines.	We'll look into it.
Green cladding is preferred.	Comment noted.
If you put a feature, swallow nesting habitat, put white wisteria on the bridge.	Comment noted.
My house is on Borregas, with a side on Ahwanee. I don't want people looking into my yard.	Comment noted. The City will install screening as part of the project that will limit visibility from the bridge into neighboring backyards.
River rock is preferred over bikes for formliner. That would be more neutral and more natural.	Comment noted.
Allow for future addition of small "art" themes on the bridge. Perhaps the bridge could be used to display art for about a month. This way the bridge could become a "destination."	Comment noted.
Still concerned that this will become Sunnyvale's next skateboard park. That will be very noisy.	Comment noted.

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General Comments

Comment/Question	Response/Answer
Sunnyvale Bike Tour Map – really looking forward to the Borregas Bike Bridges.	Comment noted. The City is in the process of updating the Sunnyvale Bike Map
How much usage does the other bike bridge get?	There is no real data on that.
The other bridge goes nowhere and is not ADA accessible.	Comment noted.
This is a fantastic project. Currently employment is hard to get to, currently commute ten miles out of the way. The City should be complimented on this public input process.	Comment noted.
Access from Borregas to Morse on Ahwanee. How will bikes get to school; it is very narrow for bikes.	The City did a study in connection with its long-range plan for a bicycle network. Ahwanee is in the plan. It is difficult to address; had to eliminate street parking in other locations which is always a very difficult community question. It will be looked at as well as alternatives.
I live a couple of blocks away. I like the project.	Comment noted.
Strongly in favor of the project. Has there been feedback from 237 neighborhood?	The City has received comments from the some residents via phone and email correspondence. Business owners in MP are very supportive.
What will the bridge do to our real estate values?	Recent Sunnyvale studies conducted before and after the installation of the JWC greenbelt have shown that bicycle and pedestrian improvements do not decrease property values

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On Bryant Street in Palo Alto, bike flow increased along there. It was more bikeable and desirable.	Comment noted.
Rumors have the Sands being replaced with a taller building.	There is no such project at this time; although it would be possible per the existing zoning.
Post the images that were circulated at the meeting on the website.	OK
Post "NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES" on the bridge.	OK
You are twenty years too late. I wish this was in when I rode my bike to Lockheed. I'm retired now.	Comment noted.
The benefits of this project will outweigh any possible problems be a very wide margin. Do what you can to address the concerns that have been raised, but above all build these bridges as quickly as possible.	Comment noted.
Sunnyvale has done well in the last few years. I view the Borregas Ave bike/ped. bridge as an example of good government. I am employed by Lockheed Martin Corporation and I often commute by bicycle to the Sunnyvale Campus where I work. Please proceed with this very good project.	Comment noted.